463 possess tea and coffee estates of their own. The rising
197 generation are, to some extent, learning Tamil and English, in addition to their own language, which is said to resemble old Canarese. And I have heard a youthful Badaga, tending a flock of sheep, address an errant
871 member thereof in very fluent Billingsgate. There were,
(887) in 1904–1905, thirty-nine Badaga schools, which were attended by 1,222 pupils. In 1907, one Badaga had passed the Matriculation of the Madras University, and was a clerk in the Sub-judge's Court at Ootacamund.

• 182 A newspaper discussion was carried on a few years ago as to the condition of the Badagas, and whether they are a down-trodden tribe, bankrupt and impoverished to such a degree that it is only a short time before something must be done to ameliorate their condition, and save them from extermination by inducing them to
(166) emigrate to the Wynād and Vizagapatam. A few have, in recent years, migrated to the Anaimalai hills, to work on the planters' estates, which have been opened up there. One writer stated that "the tiled houses, costing from Rs. 250 to Rs. 500, certainly point to their pros-
426 perity. They may frequently borrow from the Labbai to enable them to build, but, as I do not know of a single case in which the Labbai has ever seized the house and sold it, I believe this debt is soon discharged.
241 The walled-in, terraced fields immediately around their villages, on which they grow their barley and other grains requiring rich cultivation, are well worked, and
527 regularly manured. The coats, good thick blankets, and gold ear-rings, which most Badagas now possess, can only, I think, point to their prosperity, while their constant feasts, and disinclination to work on Sundays, show that the loss of a few days' pay does not affect
181 them. On the other hand, a former Native official on

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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243 The most common grain is what the natives call Korrali, which ... grows best in the colder districts Kundenad and Mekanad where the other finer grains do not grow.

Sāmé ... which is considered the best kind of the several small grains of the Hills. It grows in the warmer districts and must have better soil.

Tenney or Navoney ... which also grows only in warm places ...

Varagu ... which grows only on the slopes of the Hills in feverish places and requires ... a warmer climate, than the Hill plateau affords.

Ragy ... grows also only in places where the cold Monsoon wind cannot come ... (Metz, 1864, 152–153)

In general a careful observer, the Rev. Metz (who roamed the plateau daily for a quarter of a century) mentions here *barugu* and *ra:gi*, two species that were cultivated mainly by Kurumbas and Irulas on the lower slopes because of the greater warmth needed. Though grown occasionally in the lowest Badaga hamlets, neither was an important crop. The other three species were the main subsistence crops for Badagas.

175 177 361 ●[182] We are led to the conclusion that the Badagas displaced Kurumbas and perhaps some Todas as well in the zone which they made their own, and which was best suited to dry cultivation of their millets. While the upper limits of the zone were apparently determined by the viability of these millets, the lower limits may have been determined not by horticultural requirements but by the elevation above which malarial parasites will not breed, about 1,000 meters. (The full development of the *plasmodium* parasites in mosquito requires a minimum daily temperature of 60°F (15.6°C), which is only maintained at the lower elevations relegated to the Kurumbas, Irulas and others.) In the mid-nineteenth century Hodgson (1856, 499–500) noted plateau sites 'where formerly Kurumba villages existed but where none are now found. It is well known that the Kurumbas were driven down from the healthful summit to the malarious slope of the hills. ...'

318 [175] Not only did the Badaga settlers displace residents from these several tribes: they also removed much forest cover and radically changed the Nilgiri ecology, in the view of many experts, well before the first British planters arrived in the eighteen- forties.

There can be little question that these tracts, which are now

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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Table 3. *Occupations of the interviewed males, 1963*

		Rural Badagas	*All other Nilgiri rural communities*
I	Cultivating own or rented land	59.6%	30.7%
II	Agricultural labourer	5.0%	32.3%
III	Forestry and livestock	0.0%	7.4%
IV	Cottage industries	0.7%	5.8%
V	Manufacturing	3.7%	1.6%
VI	Construction	4.0%	2.6%
VII	Trade and business	0.3%	6.9%
VIII	Transport and communications	3.7%	4.2%
IX	Teaching and 'professions'	13.0%	5.3%
X	Non-workers, students	10.0%	3.2%
		(*n*=301)	(*n*=189)

178 184 182 619 [621]

The 1970s find an increasing number of young, college-educated Badagas settling in towns with their wives and taking well-paid jobs. These people still observe community endogamy, but in other respects their behaviour suggests that the distinctive identity of the Badaga community is nearing its end. It is no longer uncommon for urban Badagas to address rural Badagas in Tamil rather than their own language: ashamed of the state government's designation of their people as a 'Backward Class',[28] they are trying to merge with the South Indian city society and deny what they consider an 'uncivilized' parentage. Few such people regularly visit their native villages now. Once marriage with non-Badagas increases and becomes acceptable the palisade around their community will have fallen.

NOTES

175 651

1. Even though there was no tax-farmer on the plateau to harrass them until 1807; Buchanan, 1807, vol. II, 247.

175 179

2. Harkness, 1832, 138, note; Shortt & Ouchterlony, 1868, 17; Grigg, 1880, 455–456; Francis, 1908, 167; Price, 1908, 23; Hockings, 1973, 867: According to Metz, 1864, 5, Sullivan came to the Nilgiris 'at the solicitation of the hill-people themselves'. Sullivan, in a letter to the Board of Revenue in 1819, explained that 'the inhabitants are extremely anxious to have their lands measured, under an idea that they are paying more than they ought to do'; Grigg, 1880, 280. Another early influence on Badaga farming may have been the experimental farm for European crops operating at Ke:ti from 1830 to

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9

A Period of Stress

121 Badaga social history since 1812 is recorded in sufficient detail for us to delimit confidently an especially stressful period in the last century and examine its relationship to the formation of factions and religious revitalization movements. We shall attempt to answer three questions: (1) What steps did Badagas take, in the face of stress-producing situations, to bring their society back to the previously existing stability? (2) Did these steps amount to what A.F.C. Wallace (1956, *passim;* 1966, 158–163) has called revitalization—a cult movement which reinvigorates, as it were, the society that has undergone too much stress? (3) If so, what new institutions arose from this cult behaviour, or if not, why did revitalization fail to occur?

182 [175] The published sources portray some disaster confronting sections of the Badaga community almost yearly from 1845 to 1906—a period of unusual stress which threw more difficulties in the path of the Badagas than at any time since records began.

A succinct chronology of this time of troubles is presented below. Items concerning missionary endeavour have been included because their ideas were seen by the Badagas as strange and often upsetting, and proved to be a serious threat to the integrity of the Badaga community. It will be noticed that matters which can be viewed as the 'causes' as well as others which are clearly the 'effects' of stress, or its manifestations, have been included.

175 799 1845 Four Germans from the Basel Mission began preaching in

[p. 183]

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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127 latter part of the last century (Basel Mission, 1905, *passim*) leaves no doubt of a deep disturbance among Badagas during this period. Three distinct factors were responsible:

Land Legislation

656 The censuses for the last few decades of the nineteenth century record a steady increase in the Nilgiri population (both Badaga and other), implying a need for more farm-land. The British administrators responded, however, with several legislative moves (241) to conserve land resources. They stopped the traditional Badaga practice of swidden farming, in which men cleared as much forest-land as they needed and farmed it for a few years before moving elsewhere. (To the British this practice was wasteful of land, and they believed it led to soil erosion.) As an additional check on the wasteful use of large tracts they compiled an exhaustive register of all land holdings in the district, the Final Land Settlement (1881–1884), and made this the basis for annual (423) assessment of land revenues. Land holdings were restricted to a maximum of five hundred acres (202 ha.). Even the custom of cutting timber in nearby jungles was prohibited by the Madras Forest Act (1882). In the years 1863–1882 legislation thus changed • (182) the whole complexion of the Badaga farm economy and prompted doubts in many Badagas about the very survival of their community and culture. The situation was aggravated over this period by the continuing extension of eucalyptus, cinchona, tea and coffee plantations.

Missionary Activity

177 The sense of uncertainty was further aggravated by missionary attempts to convert Badagas to Christianity. This went on for many decades, and the extent of Badaga opposition to it was in a sense defined in 1856, when they burnt down the mission's rest-house at Kallatti (B.E.M.S., 1856, no. 16, 27, note). At about the same time the Revd. Metz (1864, 137) noted that 'some parties were so hostile to me that they intended bribing a Kurumba to kill me by sorcery . . . In one place the Badagas created a disturbance, and refused me admittance into their village . . .'. In 1858 the first

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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day-school was established by the mission in 1871, yet the drawbacks remained.[6] No industrial training was given at these institutions. Only in the 1880s did the Badagas begin to appreciate the merit of schooling: the number of schools on the Nilgiri Plateau 'was only 3 in 1879, but 21 in 1889, and 36 in 1889'.[7]

Natural Calamities

A third class of stress-producing factors in the experience of nineteenth-century Badagas was one of natural disasters, sometimes drought, sometimes epidemics, sometimes earthquake, sometimes famine. Badagas were not slow to attribute these calamities to the mission.[8]

Yet on a few occasions the disasters were so intense that they prompted hundreds of people to turn to the German missionaries for sustenance. In 1877 especially the general famine and crop failure led to a steep rise in food prices in the Nilgiris and to a heavy immigration of indigents from the plains. Beggars came to Ke:ti in hundreds, and the missionaries had to restrict their alms-giving to the old and the sick. The mission established some relief-work for Christians and distributed rice to their congregation; and this clearly prompted many, especially the relatives of previous converts and people familiar with the Gospel, to forsake Hinduism. 'Their idols, some said, had been of no use to them in this calamity, they would now follow the God of the Christians.'[9] The missionaries were glad to enlarge their flock, but by the end of the century some of them became more realistic about the motives prompting Badagas to convert. Thus a Badaga pastor, Jacob Kanaka, noticed that 'The larger number of the famine-converts came from the village Tandanadu, the abode of a heart-hardened people and the seat of idol-worship in this district.'[10]

Indeed it would be no exaggeration to say that the Badagas came to the mission more often for temporal than for spiritual aid. In the 1870s mission staff felt many were willing to convert, yet seemed 'more concerned about their debts of money than those of sin; they promise to embrace Christianity if their debts will be paid by the Mission' (B.E.M.S., 1849, no. 9, 45; 1850, no. 10, 23; 1897, no. 58, 53–54). The missionary was commonly sought out in times of sickness when herbal therapy failed. Food was often begged from the mission people too. Thus, for example, a hungry Hindu

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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554 generality and have different relevance depending upon circumstances. An individual's position on each of these contrasts constitutes a role, entailing certain well-recognized expectations of behaviour on appropriate occasions.

•182 554 How does a social system fragmented by cross-cutting divisions keep from falling apart into small splinter groups? The answer lies with the interaction patterns which are indicative of social cohesion, which mark out the clusters of networks and which counteract the long-standing factional disputes. Four major types of public reciprocity, of which the first is the most widespread, hold together the people separated by these cleavages: (1) public discussions; (2) the exchange of women in marriage; (3) joint participation in ceremonial meals; and (4) the exchange of goods and services. All four are types of communication, and to operate as such they must depend on network clusters; in other words, reciprocity can only be maintained on a continuing basis when it activates a persisting social structure. Badagas do not offer their goods, their meals, their daughters or even their conversation in a haphazard way to *anybody*: the social structure, analysed by Badagas in terms of these dyadic contrasts, determines quite clearly who shall receive certain goods and services, who shall marry the daughters and so on. Not only is the pattern of reciprocity dictated by the social structure—by the positioning of network clusters—but it in turn gives coherence to that structure: there is a dialectical process in the integration of the society. If Badagas were to recognize the emergent socio-economic classes as a new criterion of social differentiation their communication networks, patterns of reciprocity and system of role allocation would all have to be drastically revised. At present they prefer to (178) think somewhat anachronistically in terms of their old social organization, for it provides a reassuring stability to present-day social relations.

156 183 Although the social system assigns an individual to certain positions from birth, however, he continuously adapts himself to what he perceives of the shifting organization of network-clusters. In these adaptations the individual has a certain amount of choice. It is clearly limited by what he considers to be the relevant expectations of his fellows; but cultural norms do not dictate role change so absolutely that a man is unable to exercise his personal preferences. Cultural orientations are used by a Badaga to bolster or direct his motivations in the pursuit of the valued ends of his

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curable illnesses is described (Chapters 5-8). Some emphasis is placed on reproduction and sexuality (Chapters 3 and 4), because reproductive success is the ultimate test of any society's adaptation to its environment. The role of the therapist and associated specialists, and their relations with their clients, is an extremely critical factor in the maintenance of a folk medical system. Equally important to the propagation of this knowledge is the recruitment of apprentices and the relationships they develop with a therapist (Chapter 10). Care of the living body and the advent of death receive some consideration (Chapters 2 and 9). Finally, this study may be of particular interest to pharmacologists because it identifies each of the substances used in every medicament described (Chapters 4-7).

Differential interaction between Badagas and their environment — an environment which does of course include disease organisms — has over some 20 generations led to a survival of the healthier individuals, a higher fertility, and in general a steady expansion of their occupancy of the Nilgiri Massif, beginning with the founding of Tu:ne:ri village in the sixteenth century on the arrival of a few dozen refugees, and culminating in the very large and prosperous population of today (Diagram 1). The medical ethnography which follows will attempt to delineate the important factors in their adaptation.

Introducing the Badagas

1.2. The Badagas are a community of Hindu peasants who numbered 104,919 people in the official census of 1971. They live almost entirely on the Nilgiri Massif, which is in the westernmost corner of Tamil Nadu State, India, some 11°N from the Equator. The great majority of them are potato, cabbage and tea cultivators, but until the early years of this century they were farming such subsistence crops as barley, wheat, and several millets. The fields surround their villages and farms. They rarely irrigate, but rely instead on the two regular monsoons. Some people also keep herds of buffalo and cattle for milk and other dairy products, but not for meat.

Their long rows of brick houses lie along the leeward slopes of the hills, and are thus protected from the worst of the rains. In every village there are also temples or shrines to various Hindu gods. Badagas are nearly all Hindus of Saivite persuasion; two small but significant minorities are the Lingayats and the Christians.

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of a sociologist, is that—unlike most communities on the subcontinent—the Badagas can be categorized neither as tribe nor as caste. To be precise, they are refugees drawn from several castes in southern Mysore centuries ago, who then consolidated themselves into a community on the Nilgiri Massif and to some extent may have then emulated the social organization of the neighbouring Toda tribe (Hockings 1979a).

The very name *Badaga* means "northerner" in their language, and was clearly applied to them only after they had fled from the plains immediately to the north of the Nilgiris. The reason for this flight is made quite clear in their legends: in A.D. 1565 the Vijayanagar Empire was destroyed by Muslims invading from the north. The ancestral Badagas, fearing for the safety of their womenfolk, fled to the Nilgiris and adopted a tribal type of dress for both sexes. In 1603 a certain Father Finicio, the first European visitor, encountered them on this plateau. He described them (in Portuguese) as as Badegas, and gave the impression that they then numbered 500 to 1,000 people and inhabited no more than three villages (Finicio 1603). Already they had quite a varied mixed-farming economy. The most remarkable accomplishment of the Badagas has been the consummate success with which the community has adapted to and multiplied in surroundings that were initially wild and strange for them, and which lay at an elevation 3,000 to 5,000 feet higher than did their ancestral villages on the Mysore Plain. Their agricultural success has been partly due to their adoption of foreign techniques. Typically European crops are commonly grown today on terraces made with the help of machines. The fields are nourished with artificial fertilizers and the harvest is transported in lorries. These improved techniques have led to a better standard of living and a tendency for fathers to provide their sons with the education that they missed themselves. In the four main towns of the Massif there is now a sizeable Badaga middle class, and many of the men are doctors, lawyers, teachers, or government officials. Although still largely a rural people, speaking a distinct but unwritten Dravidian language, Badagas now have an unusually high rate of literacy in both Tamil and English.

Previous Studies

1.3. It is possible to show in considerable detail how the Badaga

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one aspect of their presumed "familiarity with learning," if we may call it that, they gained a reputation as exorcists and curers. Today some among the couple of thousand Kaṇakkas still practise these crafts, although they no longer hold a monopoly among the Badagas. (My chief medical informant, K. Sithamma, was born in a Kaṇakka family in 1891.)

1.6. During the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries the Badaga community increased from a reported three villages in 1603 to nearly 370 villages a century ago. This expansion, marking the second phase, encompassed some developments of importance to the history of Badaga therapy. The community was faced with the problem of adapting to a new geographic and social environment, and clearly succeeded in doing so. We may presume that natural selection helped the population build up a genetic resistance to whatever montane illnesses had not previously affected the people when they were living in Mysore; and that some lowland disease organisms were no longer able to survive at the new elevation, either because it was too high and cold for their animal hosts, or else because the hosts among the scattered and tiny human population died off without transferring these organisms to new hosts, or more probably because when the density of population was very low infection by particular diseases summoned forth antibodies or other disease-resistant aptitudes, which protected their descendants from any further infection by those diseases. As the settlements expanded the increasing numbers of people permitted greater transference of disease organisms and called for greater amounts of health care; but at the same time these settlements, located in most parts of the Nilgiri Massif within a zone that lay between 4000 and 7300 feet of elevation, gave people opportunities to select the more healthy residential sites, to explore the micro-environmental differences in the area, and most importantly to discover medicinal uses for dozens of new species of plants that were in many instances confined to the Massif (see Trilingual Index). We may presume that the pharmacological uses of local plants were discovered by Badaga women who worked as goatherds and men working as cowherds, by closely observing the feeding habits of their animals. Geza Roheim has made a similar observation on the control that Australian Aboriginal women have over the medicinal use of plants which they are responsible for gathering. While it is true that Badagas did not keep

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goats recently, they did so during the seventeenth century and even later (Finicio 1603: 723; Birch 1838:103).

1.7. After contact with the British a new adjustment with their changed environment was achieved by the Badagas, and their population was able to increase rapidly for several decades while there was still a very low density of population. One relevant factor, I would hypothesize, was that a change in their drinking habits followed the arrival of the British (from 1819 onward), and that this was associated with greater resistance to bacteria in the drinking water. The main drinks of the community at the time were fresh milk and stream water: "...at midday, or towards evening, parties of them are often to be seen seated on the bank of some brook or rill, partaking of their simple fare, which generally consists of barley or other meal, mixed up with some of the pure element that is gurgling past them, a little salt, and a little chilly" (Harkness 1832: 111; so also Young 1827: 42, Birch 1838:103, and Dulles 1835: 465-66). Two British officials, one a surgeon, make it clear that until the 1830s the Badagas had no alcohol, and "drunkenness is unknown here" (Macpherson 1820: lix; Ainslie 1834: 36). But the surgeon had already in 1829 recorded that he had "tasted very tolerable specimens of beer which had been brewed on these hills from malt of Native Manufacture" (Price 1908: 218). Within another two decades a staggering change had come about:

> Lord Tweeddale...in 1847,...stated that he had never anywhere seen such widespread and continuous drunkenness amongst low-class natives as prevailed there [the Nilgiri town of Ootacamund], not only in the case of those resident, but also in that of peons, followers, and servants, brought up from Madras and other places. The drink at this time available was...arrack, which ...was not very expensive. (Price 1908: 51)

This drunkenness was more of an urban than a rural phenomenon, although some Badagas did go to the town to indulge themselves. Meanwhile, at the same time that beer and arrack were becoming available, so were tea and coffee. These hot drinks were generally preferred by the Badagas to stream water, because of the cool climate, even though they had a religious tabu against heating milk (Vivekanandam Pillai 1937: 247). In this latter regard, I was told that if one keeps milk in a warm place it will "boil up" of its own accord

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As an increasingly heavy work-load was placed on the therapists more women entered the craft; and more reliance was placed on Western medicine too. Today the scientific medicine of the public health department, and of government and mission hospitals, is making serious assaults on the faith that Badagas formerly had in their own herbal therapy, and is helping the population to expand at what must be considered an alarming rate (Diagram 1). The traditional therapy was adaptive, indeed crucial, for ancient Badagas trying to gain a foothold in a strange environ-

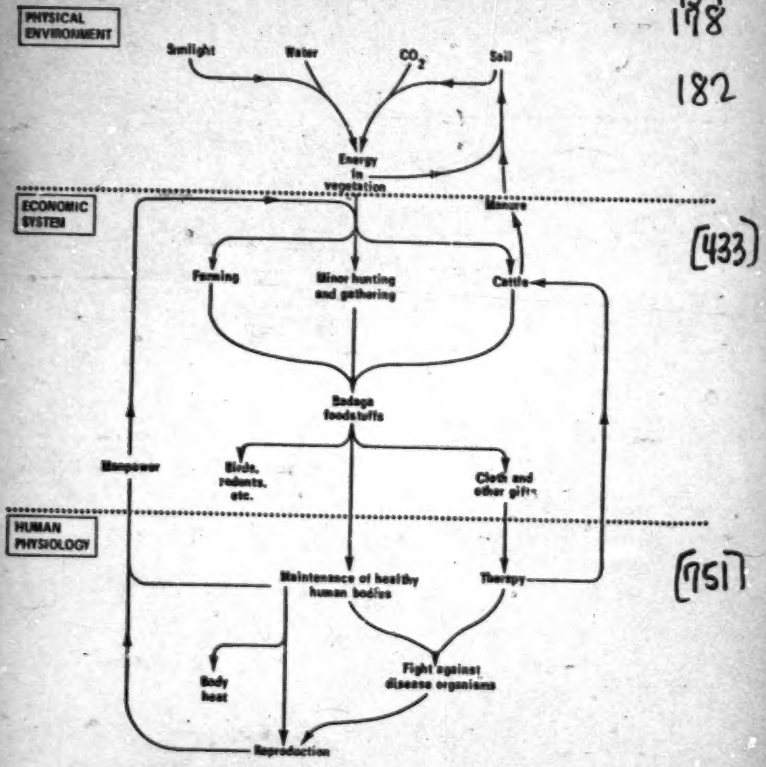

Diagram 2 : A simple model for energy flow in the Badaga ecological system

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ment. Today that environment has changed so much socially, economically and intellectually that the old therapeutic system is becoming an anachronism. This change is not simply attributable to the fact that scientific medicine is viewed as "better" in any objective sense. The number of Badagas who die either in hospitals or after being brought home (often prematurely) from them is sufficient to bolster a suspicion to the contrary. Nonetheless scientific medicine has now become the medicine of the urban middle classes in the Nilgiris, many of whom are professionals and are taken as a positive reference group by the rest of the community in these matters. The most progressive of Badagas are already finding their place in the broader urban culture of modern South India; and in this context reliance on an antiquated, indigenous therapeutic system is seen by increasing numbers as an embarrassing reminder of the primitive past. Despite the greater cost that may be involved, many Badagas now patronize Badaga doctors with degrees in scientific medicine. Since these doctors are pillars of the local urban middle class, support of them may be seen as evidence of class emulation on the part of Badaga peasants.

1.9. The simple model shown in Diagram 2 indicates some major ecological relationships in Badaga culture, the basic flow of energy, and the role of therapy in helping maintain this system.

The etic reality of these energy relationships is indisputable: only a brief survey of the ethnographic descriptions of the Badagas would demonstrate this. Yet the Badagas' own point of view on the business of living colours these relationships with the particular characteristics of a particular culture, and the recording of that emic viewpoint is essential for a fuller understanding of the culture and its therapeutics. I find myself in agreement with Frake that one

> must discover those features of objects and events which they regard as significant for defining concepts, formulating propositions, and making decisions. This conception of an ethnography requires that the units by which the data of observation are segmented, ordered, and interrelated be delimited and defined according to contrasts inherent in the data themselves and not according to a priori notions of pertinent descriptive categories. (Frake 1962 : 54)

In line with this valuable prescription, I will present in this study an

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rational manipulation—imponderable factors like the will of God, for example—others are as close to the individual as the diseases that afflict his own body. It seems that all Badagas recognize six kinds of specialists as mediators between the individual and his cultural and biological environment. (Their importance is incidentally expressed in a proverb: "You should not stay in a village without a mediator [even till] noon.")

The first of these categories is the paramount chief (*na:ku beṭṭa gauda*) of all the Badagas, a man whose powers are now greatly diminished, but who in earlier times was ultimately responsible for mediating between the community and the outside world. This meant that he was obliged to intercede with and pay revenue to the Muslim overlords in the eighteenth century and the East India Company in the early nineteenth century. Since then he has continued to mediate between the Badagas and the Toda, Kota and Kurumba tribes on issues that concern the entire community.

Secondly, each hamlet headman (*gauda*), aided by a small council of elders, is responsible for mediating between the individual and the traditional laws and customs of the community. He is thus responsible for conformity and punishment in his hamlet.

Thirdly, the priest in each village, as everywhere else in India, is responsible for mediating between man and the gods. His ability to gain their attention and win their support is crucial for the fertility of crops and cattle, and hence for the well-being of the village community.

These three types of mediators are not primarily concerned with issues of health, except incidentally when a village has to be vacated during an epidemic. But the other three mediators are all health specialists. The midwife is concerned with the yet unborn. The therapist deals with problems of the living body (human or animal). The exorcist mediates between the community and the ghosts of the dead. Each is thus relied upon for mediation in a well-defined sphere, as Diagram 5 illustrates.

This "sphere of mediation" that separates the individual Badaga from the problems of everyday life differs in its economic dimension from comparable mediation in the Western world. We normally pay our doctor or dentist for his professional services when we feel we need them; the Badaga normally does *not* pay directly for any of these six types of mediator, and indeed it is by no means always the suffering individual who makes the decision to

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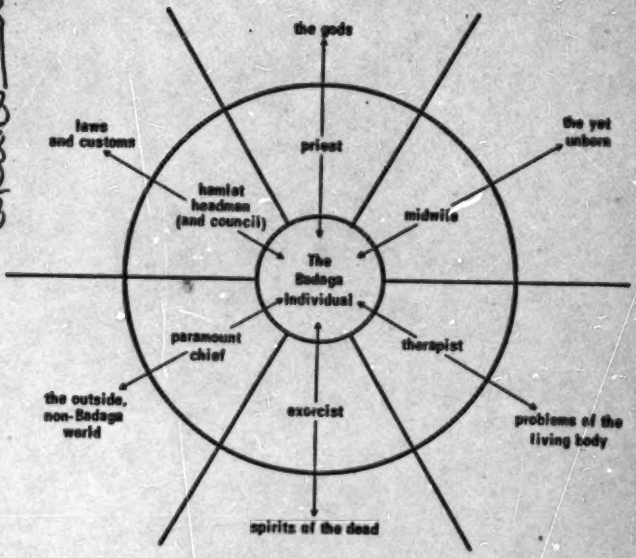

Diagram 5 : Spheres of Mediation

call in an appropriate mediator. As we shall see in the following section a token fee, travel expenses, or a small gift are the greatest material rewards that most therapists would expect as a matter of course. The prestige that comes from serving their community is in fact a more important consideration for all of the mediators; and when we recall that most therapists and all midwives are in fact women, it is understandable that they would not be practising out of a desire for material gain, since adult women are invariably married or widowed and thus are to be fully supported by their husbands or sons. In the words of the proverb, "If your lifetime is worth six [of something], taking care of [others'.] life is a hundred times more valuable." The therapists try their best, but their fellow villagers do not seem to expect miracles from them. It is worth noting that Badagas credit only the male exorcists with some

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healing *powers*; all other specialists are only deemed to have therapeutic *skills*. There is an essential difference between a spell and a medicament.

Becoming a Therapist

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10.3. About three-quarters of the Badaga therapists are women. While I do not know their exact number, it seems that several of them are to be found in every clan and phratry of the community. This means that most of the 370 villages do *not* have their own therapist but can find one in a nearby hamlet. K. Sithamma, for example, was the most prominent therapist in the four or five villages contiguous to her own, and where she normally practised her craft—including one village of the Kota tribe. A hundred therapists and another two hundred experienced midwives would be my rough estimate of their numbers at present; but not all of them are still practising today.

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A sample of 420 Badaga adults was questioned in 1963 on whether anyone came to them for any medical advice and/or treatment. About 40 per cent of both the males and females stated that they did offer such advice, as is shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Dissemination of Medical Advice

	MALES	FEMALES
Who comes for medical advice ?—		
friends and relatives in general	21.9%	21.8%
anyone in need	8.6%	3.4%
only younger people	3.3%	10.9%
older, uneducated people	1.7%	0
immediate family members only	3.7%	5.0%
no one	59.8%	58.8%
not ascertainable	1.0%	0
	(*N*=301)	(*N*=119)

This table suggests that there are as many male as female therapists: this I rather doubt. Instead it seems likely that, numerically,

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AW50 Badaga AW50

121 75 taste, smell, or most commonly sight to be *like* the illness effects: "An invisible force is dealt with visibly by means that are meant and understood to be symbolic" (Ackerknecht 1942).

10.20. The job of the therapist is to bring about, by such culturally appropriate means, the apparent termination of a condition in the sick person which either does prevent him or is potentially going to prevent him from fulfilling all his roles in Badaga society. His disablement may be permanent or quite temporary, but he or his relatives will seek help in ending it. The general status of a sick person in this society (as in any other) is made clearer by considering Talcott Parsons' useful definition of the sick as people unable to perform certain tasks or certain role behaviour. Sickness is thus different from other types of deviance because it is a status that can be legitimized if the person recognizes he is ill, wants to get well, and seeks help from the appropriate mediator in his society when a cure does not come spontaneously by the action of his body defences (Parsons 1951: 428-47).

121 888 75 There is a possibility with older patients, on the other hand, that "sickness episodes may also contribute to the orderliness of social life, since they are a useful vehicle for communicating and legitimizing changes in how social relations are distributed within a community" (Young 1976: 12). Being chronically sick can be a ●182 face-saving way of relinquishing roles one is no longer able to fulfil adequately. The many proverbs cited in the preceding chapter (9.1-9.6) indicate the clear recognition in Badaga culture that old age brings the personality into a different, "half-dried log" condition. Consequently there is less concern with healing the sick elders, and less differentiation recognized between a state of illness and one of old age. The elderly are obliged to accept the change and the curtailment of several roles, and chronic illness is in some cases an adequate means of giving them up while adopting a new and simpler role, one that entails fewer obligations.

121 75 In such a process of reorientation,

> Sickness episodes are able to communicate complex models in a readily recognizable way. Etiologies cast a broad net, implicating objects, qualities, and events in every aspect of life; they sort out these diverse kinds of fact, combine them into relationships that cannot be articulated in everyday contexts,

6: Noble K-4,5 (1962-1963) 1989
(1800-1963)
AW50 Badaga AW50
Kota AW55

CHAPTER VI

NILGIRI WYNAAD BADAGAS AND KOTAS

B 175 166 361 182 [184] B [133] B [132] B [177] B [171] Ko 241 184

The few scattered Badaga communities in the Nilgiri Wynaad have resulted from slow and continuing Badaga colonization which may extend back to a pre-1800 date. The ancestors of Kotas occupying a single hamlet probably came to serve the Todas who once lived in the Wynaad. Although Nilgiri Wynaad Badagas and upper Nilgiri Badagas are culturally affiliated, the occupance patterns related to them vary (Table IV). Several factors are responsible for the variations: Because the Wynaad is covered by a plateau with rolling hills and occasional ranges, topographic conditions are ideal for growing wet rice in broad valleys and dry field crops on hills. The climate is warm enough to permit the growth of wet rice, but too dry for two rice crops to be harvested annually from a single field. Dry seasonal conditions, reflected by estivating trees, also lead to the growth of only one dry field crop per year. Combined with the physical influences are the Malabarian, Malayalee cultural influences. Thus, Badaga house construction, employment of Paniya laborers, garden maintenance, and manner of wet rice cultivation with aid of implements drawn by buffaloes follow patterns associated with their neighbors. Kalac Kotas at Gudalur, who live in atypical houses and have lost their dry fields, continue to cultivate wet rice in the same manner as the Badagas. Nilgiri Wynaad Kota trades are similar to those of upper Nilgiri Kotas.

8: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1982 AN50 Badaga AN50

121 the kinship system in the Badaga case as having developed as a means of assigning and transferring ownership of and rights in property, especially cattle and houses, but to a lesser extent land too. We must remember that [241] in the early days Badagas practised swidden agriculture (although strangely that is not mentioned in the early ballads), and the Nilgiri population density was so low that land really had no market value there and was very easy to come by.

233 Now, keeping a herd of buffaloes requires adequate grazing and certain other conditions. One is the presence of a number of active men, typically brothers, who will keep the herd together while grazing and fend off tigers [539] when possible. Women could not do this work: the epic poem *Ba:la Sevena* [462] ridicules the mother of the hero for trying to drive the family's herd out to graze with a stick in her hand. Both swidden and ordinary plough agriculture 241 also called for the combined efforts of several men (as well as a number of 476 women), and so here too Badagas found a good reason for cultivating their 596 fields as a joint family. Many still do so today. The point to be noted is that both the buffalo-herding and ox-ploughing and swidden cultivation were • 182 economic conditions that favoured patrilocality, the joint family, and brother/sister exchange at marriage—this latter a preference which maintained a balance of manpower between two intermarrying families or settlements. If a youth married his FZD and her brother in turn married *his* 581 MBD, brother/sister exchange would result, the ideal of cross-cousin mar- 582 riage would be honoured, the two families involved would have asserted their 583 equality, and close relations would ensue between them. Where brother/ 586 sister exchange has occurred, divorce becomes rather more difficult because it places great strains on the other couple, those who are not getting divorced.

591 The girls in this system invariably go off to another village in marriage 881 at or shortly after menarche, where they will be needed to *(a)* do house-work 462 and look after small children; *(b)* do some sowing, weeding and reaping in the fields; and *(c)* raise a new generation of farmers and buffalo herdsmen. 602 In this married situation the birth of a son means that a woman has largely fulfilled all three of her obligations to the family she has joined—for on [885] marriage a Badaga girl relinquishes membership in her natal family, lineage, [562] and village, and joins those of her husband. Her membership in them is made [851] especially manifest when her husband dies and a son continues to support her in her husband's village; and when she too dies it is her husband's village and its headman who are responsible for conducting her funeral, with the collaboration of her husband's family.

562 The economic decision-making rests with the adult men: when to sow, what to plant in each kind of soil, when and where to move the cattle in search of new grazing, when to harvest, and, in former times, when to move 182 the swidden. These decisions call for accurate topographical knowledge, and it is thus both appropriate and necessary that the detailed local knowledge 562 which boys acquire in work and play should be put to good use when they 591

8: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1982 AN50 Badaga AN50

become householders—in their natal villages, that is. Women are never expected to make such decisions. Hence patrilocality is a principle of survival, a fact which is reinforced by the phenomenon of repeated divorces that might take one woman in her lifetime as a bride to two or three different villages, in each of which she would be something of a novice with regard to the local ecological conditions.

For a male, membership of his father's lineage—whether maximal, major, minor, or minimal—is inalienable. There may nowadays be little or no assertion of the solidarity of an individual with his lineage during his entire lifetime, but yet the tie remains. Some lineages do however still maintain in common a herd of buffaloes.

For females the descent situation is rather less clear. A woman at marriage joins the family and hence the lineage of her husband. This connection is not inalienable, on the other hand, for divorce may easily rupture it. The term for affines *(nantan-natta)* is applied by a man's family to all of his wife's natal family and lineage; it is similarly applied to all the agnatic relatives of any potential wife. This is a commonplace in Dravidian kinship systems. Among Badaga women we also find that a wife calls her own parents and brothers *nantan*, and in anticipation of a certain married future may even use this term in reference to them while she is still a small, unmarried girl, just as her potential husbands would.

3. The Affines

The community based on patrilocal residence is a moral entity in which deference is enforced by authority. Relationships with one's agnates are always extensive and carefully maintained, and this contrasts with the narrowness of affinal relationships. The two categories are further differentiated in behaviour by the fact that a male can be fined by the village headman if he does not show the proper respect due to an agnate, and primarily to a member of his own village; but there is no fine for lack of respect to an affine.

Badagas have a saying, "There is no relationship among affines." This simply means that Ego does not always recognize generation levels among his affines. What *is* important, here as elsewhere in the kinship realm, is the age differential. Take, for example, the unexpected situation (Diagram 1) of

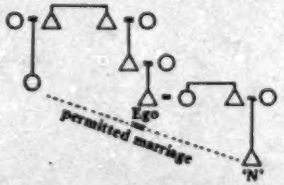

Diagram 1

8: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1982 AW50 Badaga AW50

5. Adoption and Inheritance

Upon the death of a family head only his sons inherit his property. The farm-land and cattle are divided between them, or else maintained undivided as joint family property. But with regard to the house, the Badagas have the unusual institution of ultimogeniture: it is the youngest son who inherits the house and usually keeps his aging mother and unmarried sisters in it. New houses might have to be built for the elder brothers. The ultimogeniture makes good sense in a society where often a girl was married by the age of 12, and where consequently the oldest son of an elderly widow might be no more than 13 or 14 years her junior. Her youngest son is more likely to be a young man in the prime of life, more vigorous, with fewer dependents, and better able to provide for his old mother. By the time he has grown up, his elder brothers have commonly married, cleared fresh farmland, and built themselves new houses near this land (Rivers 1906: 560; Frazer 1918: 81).

Since the Badagas were until recently non-literate, and even now write wills only in rare cases, there has always been a series of rules to handle the transition of property from the dead to the living, whether lineal male descendants or adopted sons. Their substitute for a written will is the *sa:la jo:li*, a verbal statement made by the dying man. Each wish *(sa:la)* in it is normally followed by his relatives, but if any wish seems unfair they will immediately question him about it. Unfairness should here be construed as meaning an unequal division of property between the male heirs or too much generosity towards the wife and/or daughters. These people will try to reach a compromise with the dying man so that his wishes can later be followed without further argument.

There are no rules about particular kinds of property going to particular categories of relatives, with the one exception that when the head of the household dies, his main house goes to his youngest son. Even so, the *value* of that house has to be divided between all the sons, so that the youngest may well have to give something to his elder brothers. The rights of the youngest son in the house are absolute. It is true that he must be ready to shelter his widowed mother there; yet if he wants to he can sell the house without prior consultation. The funerals of his father and mother will be held there, under the superintendence of their *eldest* son. Yet if the eldest son wants to bring Kota musicians to perform at the funeral, and the youngest son prohibits this, his will must prevail since it is his house.

In 1963 I interviewed a sample of 301 Badaga males (aged 15 and above), and a further sample of 119 adult females. These people came from all parts of the Nilgiri District; and one of the questions asked concerned the number of houses that they "owned." In Table 1 it will be seen that 38% of the men did own houses, but only 19% owned more than one house. The percentages of women "owning" houses were at nearly all levels less than for